



## Indian Knowledge Systems and Behavioural Challenges in Children and Adolescents: Traditional Insights for Contemporary Mental Health

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### Abstract

One of the major problems that concerns contemporary society is the behavioral challenges that today's children and adolescents face. Many factors contribute to this challenge, but the prominent causes are rapid social transformation, changing family structures, academic pressure, and imbalances in lifestyle, which have contributed to emotional instability, behavioral disturbances, and stress among youngsters. Modern health science considers all these concerns and focuses on mental well-being as an essential factor of overall health.

However, the need for culturally rooted, preventive, and holistic approaches to mental health care is gaining popularity these days.

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) provides a comprehensive understanding of human behavior based on discipline, ethical living, and harmony between the mind and conduct.

This paper explores how the Indian Knowledge System analyzes behavioral issues in children and adolescents and discusses traditional methods supporting mental well-being and regulation of behavior. Without depending on scientific theories or clinical models, the study presents an overview of value-based practices such as discipline in everyday life, mindful living, yoga, breathing practices, and moral education.

The paper frames these ideas in the context of present-day social realities and connects them with the goals of the National Education Policy 2020, which promotes the integration of the Indian Knowledge System with modern areas of study. It argues that the Indian Knowledge System presents practical, meaningful, and sustainable ways to cope with the behavioral problems of contemporary society.

### Keywords

Indian Knowledge System, behavioral challenges, children and adolescents, mental well-being, value-based practices, National Education Policy 2020

### Introduction

In today's world, increasing academic demands, rapid technological exposure, reduced outdoor activity, and changing family dynamics have significantly affected childhood and adolescence. As a result, the mental and behavioral well-being of children and adolescents has emerged as a burning issue in contemporary society. These factors result in behavioral concerns such as anger, anxiety, restlessness, emotional withdrawal, and lack of discipline. Such behavioral patterns are frequently observed at home, in social life, and in educational institutions.

According to modern health science, behavior is an important dimension of mental health and promotes awareness, counseling, and early intervention. Though these approaches play a vital role, they often focus on managing behavioral symptoms rather than nurturing inner balance, emotional maturity, and ethical conduct. In this context, Indian Knowledge Systems offer an alternative and meaningful perspective for interpreting and responding to behavioral challenges.

As per the Indian Knowledge System, behavior is not an isolated occurrence but the result of everyday habits, emotional environment, values, and self-discipline. Indian Knowledge Systems represent a rich collection of traditional knowledge that has been developed over many centuries. They offer clear insights into the human mind and behavior.

The present paper delves into behavioral problems in children and adolescents through the lens of Indian Knowledge Systems. It focuses on how traditional practices can help control behavior and promote mental well-being in today's contemporary society. The discussion also aligns with the objectives of NEP 2020, which emphasizes the implementation of Indian Knowledge Systems into education.

### Research Methodology

The methodology is qualitative, conceptual, and descriptive in nature and is based on the following:

- Critical reading of classical Indian texts related to the mind, behavior, and ethics;

- Review of literature on Indian Knowledge Systems and mental well-being;
- Interpretation of NEP 2020 documents; and
- Conceptual analysis of behavioral issues observed in contemporary society.

The paper is not based on quantitative data, clinical assessment, or scientific theories. Instead, it emphasizes interpretative understanding and cultural relevance. The main aim is to explore how Indian Knowledge Systems offer practical and preventive measures to address the behavioral challenges faced by children and adolescents in today's society.

### **Behavioral Problems of Children and Adolescents in Contemporary Society**

In today's world, change is the law of life, and children and adolescents grow and thrive in an environment of rapid change. Along with digital engagement, academic competition, social pressure, and limited interaction with family, these factors transform their emotional development and affect their behavior. Some behavioral challenges faced in today's contemporary society include:

- Mood swings
- Emotional instability
- Irritation and anger
- Anxiety, fear, complexes, and insecurity
- Aggression and impulsive behavior
- Withdrawal symptoms and lack of social engagement

These are serious problems and affect not only individuals personally but also cause lasting effects on family relationships, classroom dynamics, and social harmony. However, Indian Knowledge Systems observe these behavioral problems as signs of imbalances in lifestyle, emotional care, and moral orientation rather than permanent characteristics.

### **Understanding the Behavior and Mind through Indian Knowledge Systems**

Indian Knowledge Systems present a holistic view of behavior. According to Indian Knowledge Systems, the mind is considered sensitive, adaptable, and easily influenced by habits, environment, and moral guidance. Behavior is seen as the outcome of inner balance or disturbance. When observed through the lens of Indian Knowledge Systems, the focus is on harmony between thought, emotion, and action; balance in day-to-day life; ethical and value-based behavior; and responsibility toward self and society. Therefore, as per Indian Knowledge Systems, behavioral problems should not be considered flaws, but rather as opportunities for guidance and improvement through mindful living and positive surroundings.

### **Behavior Pattern in Children and Adolescents**

Traditional Indian thought is of the view that childhood and adolescence are formative stages of life. Therefore, whatever impressions are formed during this period influence personality, overall behavior, and emotional stability. Hence, right guidance, discipline, and proper nurturing play a very important role. Indian Knowledge Systems stress the role of:

- Parents as moral and emotional guides
- Mentors and teachers who shape the intellect and character of individuals
- Society, which provides a supportive environment during this period

Thus, if a combination of good guidance and a nurturing environment is provided during these formative years, children and adolescents can develop self-control, patience, and emotional stability.

### **Traditional Indian Knowledge System–Based Approaches to Regulate Behavior**

#### **Daily Discipline**

Indian Knowledge Systems emphasize that daily routines should be structured so as to reduce behavioral uncertainty and impulsiveness. Discipline in regular life helps children feel secure and active. Moreover, regularity in waking up, eating habits, studying, physical activities, and rest brings order to the mind and helps inculcate discipline.

#### **Role of Proper Diet and Lifestyle**

Food is closely linked to mental clarity and emotional balance. Consuming simple and fresh food and maintaining moderate eating habits must be encouraged. Irregular routines and excessive indulgence disturb emotional stability and overall behavior.

#### **Yoga and Physical Movement Activities**

Physical activities play a very vital role in daily life. Traditional practices like yoga and regular



physical exercise help children release their energy in a positive manner. Such practices are important for children and adolescents, as they promote balance, patience, and calmness, resulting in healthy behavior.

#### Breathing Practices for Emotional Balance

There are certain breathing practices that help to calm one's emotions and reduce inner agitation. These practices encourage relaxation and emotional regulation. They are beneficial for hyperactive children or those who experience anger or fear.

#### Self-Awareness and Silence

Spending moments of silence is an effective way of self-reflection. Sitting quietly allows children to become aware of their thoughts and emotions. This practice, as per Indian tradition, nurtures self-control and reduces impulsive reactions, which are now increasing due to screen exposure and are affecting contemporary society.

#### Value-Based Education

Value-based education, such as compassion, responsibility, truthfulness, respect, and honesty, forms the foundation of Indian Knowledge Systems. Moral values imparted in the form of stories, teachings, and examples from traditional literature help to shape ethical behavior and social sensitivity.

#### Family and Social Environment

Indian Knowledge System encourages peaceful and supportive family and social life of an individual. Children, and most importantly adolescents, feel emotionally secure when they receive sufficient love, understanding, and proper guidance. A positive environment reduces behavioral disturbances and is very useful for good mental health. Sound mental health is necessary for the proper and healthy growth of an individual, as criminal tendencies are increasing among children and adolescents due to the influence of screen exposure and early childhood disturbances. This is an alarming problem faced by contemporary society and cannot be cured by modern health practices alone. Hence, traditional practices of Indian

Knowledge Systems focus on the prevention of problems rather than treatment through modern medical practices.

#### Indian Knowledge Systems and Modern Health Awareness

Modern health science acknowledges the importance of good mental health, especially during childhood and adolescence. Indian Knowledge Systems complement this awareness by providing preventive and culturally grounded approaches.

Implementation of Indian Knowledge Systems with a Modern Health Perspective

- Encouragement of early emotional guidance
- Promotion of balanced living and self-discipline
- Reduction of stress and behavioral instability
- Support for long-term mental well-being

Indian Knowledge Systems enrich modern approaches by focusing on lifestyle, values, and inner balance rather than replacing them.

#### Relevance to NEP 2020

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 highlights the importance of value-based education, mental well-being, and holistic development. It strongly supports the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into academic curricula and broader social discourse.

#### Focus of NEP 2020

- Integration of traditional knowledge with modern education
- Promotion of yoga and mindfulness along with ethical learning
- Focus on the mental health and emotional development of learners

Thus, the study aligns with NEP 2020 by demonstrating how Indian Knowledge Systems can address behavioral issues in children and adolescents in a contemporary context.

#### Discussion

The discussion highlights that Indian Knowledge Systems offer practical and traditional solutions to modern behavioral challenges. These practices are preventive in nature rather than corrective and emphasize nurturing rather than control. The simplicity and cultural relevance of these approaches make them easily accessible to families, communities, and schools. In a rapidly changing society, Indian Knowledge Systems promote mindful living through values and



discipline. When combined with modern health awareness, these traditional insights can effectively contribute to mental well-being, emotional balance, and behavioral regulation among young individuals

### **Conclusion**

Behavioural challenges among children and adolescents are complex issues shaped by changing social conditions. While modern health science addresses these challenges through awareness and support, Indian Knowledge Systems offer time-tested, holistic solutions rooted in balance, discipline, and values.

By focusing on daily routine, lifestyle habits, physical activity, emotional regulation, and moral education, IKS nurtures mentally stable and responsible individuals. The integration of these traditional insights with contemporary health perspectives, as encouraged by NEP 2020, provides a sustainable framework for addressing behavioural problems in modern society.

Indian Knowledge Systems thus remain highly relevant in responding to contemporary mental health challenges and offer meaningful solutions aligned with cultural values and social harmony.

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